



A DAMPENER.

I.

MAN OF THE HOUSE (*just arrived from the city*)—"Ah, I didn't know we had a guest. Wouldn't you like a little—er—liquid refreshment before you eat?"

WANDERING PELEG—"I seldom refuse, sir."

to go down in their purses for the wherewithal to provide the youngsters with books, our boasted education system cannot be called free. The inventive genius of man is not yet equal to the task of producing books which are proof against the destructive powers of the average human boy, and the expense is something quite formidable in the case of the poor man, who, of course, always has the largest family. In fact, investigation shows that the book difficulty is the chief cause of absenteeism, the problem which is at present causing educationists so much thought. In the State of Massachusetts an enormous increase in attendance followed immediately upon the introduction of free text-books, and no doubt the same reform would be equally satisfactory in its results here. Let us have our schools free in fact as well as in name.



II.

MAN OF THE HOUSE—"Looks as though he were going to this time, any how."—Puck.

A WORD or two in the capacious ear of the *encore* fiend—the persistent nuisance of Toronto concerts. There is a little work on the "Rudimentary Principles of Good Manners" which we would like to commend to your attention, sir—and madam. It costs but a few cents, and may be had at almost any bookstore. Get it without delay and give it a careful reading, so that you may hereafter have some comprehension of the vulgarity of your conduct when you outrageously demand double the quantity of programme you have paid for.

NEVER was the *encore* boor more unmannerly than at the MacLennan concerts last week. The original programmes were unusually generous, no less than twenty items being promised. To be sure, the performance in every case was good enough to justify a recall, but that was no excuse for the brutality of demanding a repetition of nearly every number, as the *encore* fiend did. He—and she—were too stupid to understand the politeness of the artists as they reappeared in response to the applause and bowed their thanks; na, na! they maun aye come back an' do't a' ower again! The consequence was that the good-natured company were kept hard at it from eight till within a few minutes of eleven! Managers owe it to their performers and to the reasonable portion of their audiences to make a firm stand against this *encore* nuisance.

JOHN STACEY, a cattle dealer from Chatham, was greatly surprised Wednesday when Constable Willis served him with a summons ordering him to appear before the Magistrate on a charge of cruelly ill-treating animals. He was on hand yesterday, and pleaded not guilty to the charge, and as he was not ready for trial the case was allowed to stand over to the 22nd inst. It is stated that at Chatham he put fifteen head of cattle, forty-five pigs, forty-three sheep and two calves into one 33-foot car. When the consignment arrived in Toronto one of the pigs was dead and a sheep was dying.

So read an item in the *Mail* the other day. We trust, if subsequently found guilty as charged, the magistrate salted down Mr. Stacey as he deserved. But what we want to enquire is why our city street-car people are not occasionally "surprised" with summonses for the cruel overcrowding of the consignments of human freight they carry on Yonge and Queen streets?

WHAT OUR "HIGHER EDUCATION" IS DOING FOR US.

BOOK AGENT—"Yes, *ma'am*, you don't often mee with a book like this, I guess. Fine quarto size—good point—real heavy reading matter—half-calf binding, and a GLOSSARY!"

HIGHLY-CULTIVATED LADY—"Well, I *may* take a copy, but I should prefer one *without* the 'Glossary.' We are a very literary family, and think the reading matter is everything. As for a binding with any *gloss*, it would be a decided objection. A plain *dead calf* is all we should require!"

EMBLEM-ATIC.

POET—"Let me read you my latest verses:

'As I sit in my lonely attic,
Oh, strange are the thoughts which throng—'

CRITIC—"Attic! Why attic? You don't live in no attic. In fact, you have as comfortable a place as a man could want."

POET—"Oh, it's merely a figure of speech you know. The attic is supposed to be the typical abode of the sons of genius."

CRITIC—"Ah, I see. Sort of emblem-atic."